(c) To boost Indian coffee exports as well as to maximise export earnings, the Coffee Board is implementing a medium term export strategy during the current plan period.The key initiatives identified in the strategy to improve coffee exports from India are as under:—

— Shifting product mix in favor of Arabica.

— Cost reduction to improve competitiveness.

— Improving quality perception of Indian coffee.

— Integrating Indian coffee with the global coffee trade.

— Guarantee reliability of exporters.

— Carryout a major communication initiative in key overseas markets to enhance the image of Indian coffee as well as to improve market share.

— Participation in important overseas trade fairs involving exporters and grower exporters.

— Organising buyer-seller meets between Indian exporters and overseas buyers in key markets.

— Hosting visits of roaster/buyer delegation from leading consuming countries to Indian coffee tracks and facilitating interaction with the industry representatives.

— Organising "cupping" of Indian coffees by international coffee experts to evaluate and propagate the finer attributes of Indian coffees.

— Institution of Export awards to encourage exporters.

Competitiveness of industrial groups

†1384. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to take steps to make industrial groups more competitive at the international level;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any steps in this regard;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) to (d) The Government's approach to industrial sector growth and development is that of increasing efficiency and competitiveness of the Indian industry to enable them to stand on their own in the face of global competition. This approach is manifested in the broad strategy enunciated in the Union Budget 2002-2003, which lays emphasis on deepening structural reforms and regeneration of industrial sector. In pursuance of this approach and strategy, Government has initiated several measures which are mentioned below:—

- The Union Budget 2002-2003 has made allocations towards some of the major schemes, which will strengthen infrastructure and boost demand especially in construction housing steel and cement sectors. These schemes include PM's Gram Sadak Yojana, Infrastructure Equity Fund, Urban Reform Incentive Fund, City Challenge Fund, are Accelerated Power Development Reform Programme.
- DIPP has entrusted sector-wise studies in respect of capital goods, pulp and paper and cement industries to organisations of international repute with a view to assess global competitiveness of these industries.
- The Administrative Price Mechanism (APM) in the petroleum sector has been dismantled w.e.f. 1.04.2002. The market forces will now determine the prices in the petroleum sector.
- To deal with the forces of competition, industrial and other companies require restructuring on a continuous basis. For this purpose it is essential to promote out of court mechanisms for timely and transparent corporate debt restructuring of viable debt entities. A mechanism for Corporate Debt Restructuring (CDR) has been set up under the guidelines issued by the RBI.
- To improve the operating environment of the companies and to improve business confidence, the Companies Act has been amended to allow buyback of shares, by the companies.
- To deepen reforms in stock exchanges and to provide protection

to the investors, Union Budget 2002-2003 proposes amendments inSEBI Act 1992.

- The draft Electricity Bill has been introduced in the Parliament for facilitating comprehensive power sector reforms.
- The Competition Bill has been introduced in the Parliament for promoting competition and curbing monopoly.
- The RBI has cut Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) to 5 per cent from 5.5 per cent a move that is likely to release Rs. 5000 crores to banks for lending.This move will ease the liquidity position further.
- The Reserve Bank has also announced measures for stepping up growth momentum with stimulus to agriculture, housing, small-scale sector and exports in its credit policy for 2002-03. It also aims at facilitating better credit delivery and moving forward with structural reforms.
- Power sector reforms have received a boost in pursuance of the centre's decision to provide grants equal to the amount by which States have been able to reduce their power sector deficits. The States of Haryana, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have been able to reduce losses in the past couple of years. These three States will now be eligible for matching grant under the Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme (APDRP).

Duty free access to Bangladeshi products

1385. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has granted duty free access to 40 Bangladeshi products;

(b) if so, the reciprocal gesture shown by the Bangladesh;

(c) whether any request has been received by Government to receive/ replace certain products in the list of 40 Bangladeshi products provided duty free access; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government on the request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (b) During the